

453rd Cargo Transfer Company; Have Forklift, Will Haul

Story by Spc Timothy S. Melzow, Photo by Spc. C. Elijah Spencer
211th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Kandahar Air Field, Afghanistan—Cargo; it's as constant as the North Star. Everything from bullets and beans, to troops, trucks, and tools, is transported to those who need it. Americans fighting the war on terrorism at Kandahar Air Field (KAF), know all too well how important cargo is to their ongoing operations. The 453rd Cargo Transfer Company (CTC), based in Houston, TX, is making sure the thousands of tons of cargo gets to where it needs to go. With 30 soldiers at KAF, the task of moving cargo from point A to point B rests on their shoulders.

The CTC is designed to operate from an airfield, a seaport, or at a railhead, all at the same time if required. Operating out of the Arrival/



Spc. Jenifer Caona ground guides for Spc. Amado Castellano as they load mail onto an aircraft.

Departure Airflow Control Group or ADACG, the company runs a 24-hour, 7 days a week schedule.

Specialist Courtney McClelland from New Orleans, LA, is a cargo specialist who

operates a mammoth cargo lift vehicle known as the RETCH (Rough Terrain Container Handler). The RETCH has the capability to pick up 20 foot and 40 foot cargo containers called CONEXes. Dwarfed by

the immense monstrosity of the vehicle, McClelland maneuvered the RETCH into position, and with great skill, plucked a huge container off a

See *CTC* pg. 3



Mr. James Cox works over some contracts to ensure a good deal

Contracting Services; It's kind of stressful, but someone has to do it.

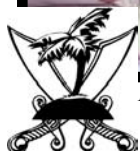
*Story by Spc Zia Ul Haq
Photo by Spc. C. Elijah Spencer*
211th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Kandahar Air Field, Afghanistan – With each passing day, life on Kandahar Air Field (KAF) improves. This is made possible by the men located in the contracting of-

fice. The contracting office helps keep the war moving in the right direction, by the judicious application of money. Without a steady supply of equipment the goal of the coalition forces would be much harder to reach.

The job of the con-

See *Contracts*
pg. 11





U.S. Soldier Marries Bride Via Videophone



By **WILSON RING**
Associated Press Writer

COLCHESTER, Vt. (AP) — Joanne Packer wore black and held a bouquet of flowers at the Vermont National Guard headquarters, while her husband-to-be wore desert camouflage as he sat at a table in Afghanistan.

They were connected by videophone, and there was a long pause after chaplain Charles Purinton asked Lt. Col. Leon Ensallada if he was willing to commit to the vows of marriage. A technician whispered that Purinton should ask again.

"I will," Ensallada said to relieved laughter in the Vermont room. "I will, I will, I will."

After Purinton asked Packer if she was willing to make the same vows, she answered, "I will, I will, I will."

"I love you, wife," Ensallada said before about 15 family, friends, guard members and reporters cleared out of the conference room to give the newlyweds a few moments alone.



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Coalition Task Force Warrior

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Kandahar Fire Department Tip of the Week

Burn barrels should only be used for burning documents; letters & packages with mailing addresses on them. Locate the barrel at least 50 feet from combustible materials. The burn barrel should have some sort of screen covering to avoid hot ambers from flying out. In addition, the barrel needs to be monitored; have an extinguisher close by and put out with water after the contents are destroyed.

In case of fire or emergency, contact the KAF fire department hotline at **841-1225**

Submitted by **TSgt Michael Hoesch, Assistant Fire Chief**





C-17 cargo plane and placed it on the receiving dock. "This vehicle is essential to our operations," he said. "Without the RETCH, it would be almost impossible to unload these containers. Our survival basically depends on this machine." Along with the RETCH, the ATLAS forklift is equally important to the operations of the 453rd. McClelland stressed the importance of keeping the machines in top working condition by performing thorough and regular Preventive Maintenance Checks and Services.

Staff Sgt. John Anderson from Corpus Christi, TX, is the Air Mobility Load Planner. He makes sure all outgoing cargo is center balanced and properly weight calculated for transport on the Air Force cargo planes. He stressed to his young soldiers the importance of safely loading and offloading cargo in order to prevent unnecessary accidents.

"Wearing the proper safety equipment is essential," said Spc. Benny Trevino, a Cargo Specialist, also from Corpus Christi, TX. "Hard hats are a must. You must be aware of your surroundings at all times. Pallets shifting during flight could be harmful, and trailers could roll back off the scale during loading and unloading."










Anderson was upbeat when he found out his unit was being deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. This being his first deployment, he commented on how honored he is to serve his country. "I am excited [about] being here," he said. "It certainly is a different experience here. I didn't join the [Army] Reserves just to stay home."

Lt. Brandi Blakes, the commander of the 453rd, complimented her troops on how they handle the immense responsibility of their duties. The Houston, TX native, expressed the importance of her unit's

mission and how proud she is of the job they are doing. "I look forward to bringing everyone home [after we've completed our mission here]," Blakes said. "I have some great soldiers and they do their jobs well. It's something different everyday."

Indeed, everyday brings new challenges to the soldiers of the 453rd. Just as certain as the sun falls and rises, the cargo keeps coming in. For members of the 453rd CTC, their reward is in knowing that their tireless efforts benefit everyone on base fighting the war on terrorism.

KANDAHAR WEEKLY FORECAST

	Mon Feb 09	Tue Feb 10	Wed Feb 11	Thur Feb 12	Fri Feb 13	Sat Feb 14	Sun Feb 15
							
	Cloudy With rain Showers & Haze	Partly Cloudy With Haze	Partly Cloudy With haze	Partly Cloudy With haze	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy
HIGH	66	66	68	70	75	76	76
LOW	41	37	39	39	42	42	44
SUNRISE	0224	0223	0223	0222	0221	0220	0219
SUNSET	1318	1319	1319	1320	1321	1322	1323

KANDAHAR COMBAT WEATHER TEAM





World News

Group Takes Over City in Haiti; 4 Dead



By **MICHAEL NORTON**
Associated Press Writer

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — An armed opposition group seized control of Haiti's fourth-largest city in clashes that killed at least four people, while the government vowed to restore order.

Members of the Gonaives Resistance Front on Thursday set fire to the mayor's home in Gonaives, 70 miles northwest of Port-au-Prince, then doused the police station with fuel, lighting it while officers fled, Haitian radio reports said.

At least four opponents of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide were killed in gunbattles with police, Gonaives Resistance Front leader Wynter Etienne told Radio Vision 2000. Radio Metropole reported 20 people were wounded and more than 100 inmates were freed from the jail.

"Gonaives is liberated," Etienne told reporters. "Aristide has to go... We've liberated the police station and freed the population" from Aristide's rule.

Etienne said the group aims to take con-

trol of other towns.

Government spokesman Mario Dupuy said the armed attackers didn't have the support of most people in Gonaives and linked the unrest to violence in the nearby Central Plateau.

The attacks "are terrorist acts undertaken by the armed wing of the opposition," Dupuy said. "The police will have to take measures to re-establish order."

Thursday's clashes came a day after Bahamas Foreign Minister Fred Mitchell and Colin Granderson, assistant secretary general of the Caribbean Community, concluded talks with the opposition and met separately with Aristide.

Leaders of the opposition Democratic Platform said that during the two days of talks they sought to "explain why Aristide and his government have to go." The opposition leaders said they would "never engage in any kind of negotiation to maintain Aristide in power."

Discontent has been growing in Haiti since Aristide's party swept 2000 legislative elections that observers said were flawed. Other countries have distanced themselves from Aristide, poverty has deepened, and protests have grown more numerous and chaotic.

At least 55 people have been killed in the Caribbean country since mid-September in clashes between police, protesters and Aristide supporters.

Members of the armed group in Gonaives were once allied with Aristide but turned on him last year after their leader, Amiôt Metayer, was found murdered Sept. 22. Metayer had long supported Aristide, but many of his followers now accuse the government of involvement in the killing.

Aristide has denied involvement, saying only the opposition stood to gain.

Roughly 200,000 people live in Gonaives and surrounding areas. The city has been the site of many protests led by Metayer's supporters, who recently changed their name from the "Cannibal Army" to the Gonaives Resistance Front.

Haiti won its independence from France in a black slave revolt 200 years ago but has experienced little freedom since, suffering through a string of dictators interspersed with more than 30 military coups.

After 29 years of the Duvalier family dictatorship, Aristide, then a slum priest, won presidential elections by a landslide. He was overthrown the next year, then restored in 1994 by a U.S. invasion.

He was re-elected in 2000, but has been plagued by political troubles. Opposition leaders have demanded Aristide's resignation, accusing his government of incompetence and corruption.

Aristide has refused to step down before his term ends in 2006 and has defended his government, saying it has made progress despite many obstacles.

In the capital of Port-au-Prince, hundreds allied in support of Aristide outside the National Palace Thursday, chanting: "Aristide five years! If they don't like it, 10 years!"

They gathered after the funeral of Aristide supporter Lionel Victor, who was shot with a tear gas canister by police at close range during a clash with anti-government protesters on Jan. 28. Aristide has said an investigation is under way.





World News

Brits Offer to Lead NATO Afghan Mission

By **PAUL AMES**
Associated Press Writer

MUNICH, Germany (AP) — Britain has offered to lead an expanded NATO peacekeeping mission in northern Afghanistan where an outbreak of deadly factional fighting in recent days provided a reminder of lawlessness still gripping the country.

British Defense Secretary Geoff Hoon issued a statement Saturday saying his government would be willing to take command of a Northern Region Group for the international force.

The statement came at an international security conference in Munich, Germany. Britain was one of several NATO nations to offer troops Friday after months of appeals from the United Nations and Afghan authorities for an extended peacekeeping operation.

Officials said Britain would lead a network of NATO military teams based in five or six cities across a swath of northern territory. Eventually, the alliance plans to set up similar arrangements around the country in an effort to improve stability and support the rule of the Afghan government.

NATO diplomats said preparations were more advanced in the north because the situation was relatively more secure there. Violence, possibly over drugs, broke out in the north on Thursday. An official on Saturday said one person was killed. Earlier television reports had put the death toll at 20.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai welcomed Friday's offers from NATO to expand the force, which currently has around 6,000 troops confined to Kabul, the capital, and the northern city of Kunduz. NATO has struggled for months to find enough troops for military teams to help promote recon-



struction in provincial cities, with nations reluctant to commit to a mission judged dangerous and expensive.

Aside from Britain, Italian Defense Minister Antonio Martino confirmed Italy's commitment, but said it was contingent on parliamentary approval.

In Berlin, German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder also said units from a 5,000-strong Franco-German army brigade could play a role.

Diplomats said other countries willing to contribute include

Norway, Turkey, the Netherlands, non-NATO nations Sweden and Finland, and Romania which is due to join the alliance in the next few weeks.

Although NATO officials said the numbers of new troops had not been finalized, U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said Friday that it was "realistic" that five such teams of 80 to 300 soldiers could be in place by June, when national elections are slated.



Spirit Rover Digs Into First Rock on Mars

By **GREG RISLING**
Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Fresh from being given a clean bill of health, the Spirit rover drilled its first tiny hole in a rock on the surface of Mars, NASA scientists said.

A tool equipped with small, diamond-shaped heads cut 2.7 millimeters deep into a small area of a sharply angled rock dubbed Adirondack. The circular hole,

measuring about 45 millimeters wide, could give scientists clues to Mars' geologic past.

"We made some history here. We put the first planned hole on Mars," Stephen Gorevan, a scientist handling some of Spirit's workload, said Saturday.

"The rock gave us a lot of resistance," Gorevan said. "We needed three hours to go this deep."





THE SPORTS

Boxer Lewis Said to Announce Retirement

By **ROBERT MILLWARD**

AP Sports Writer

LONDON (AP) — Lennox Lewis scheduled a news conference for Friday amid reports he will retire rather than risk his World Boxing Council title in a rematch against Vitali Klitschko. If that happens, Lewis will be the first active world heavyweight champion since Rocky Marciano quit while still holding the title. Marciano did it almost 50 years ago. After just two fights in 26 months, including an eight-round demolition of former champion Mike Tyson, Lewis appears set to call an end to his professional boxing career.

Secretive to the end, Lewis was keeping his decision to himself. His trainer, Emanuel Steward, did not return calls. But Lewis has made no effort to meet a March 1 deadline set by the WBC to set up a fight with Klitschko, and the consensus among the boxing fraternity is that he will retire.

Lewis hasn't even told HBO what he plans to do. The television network paid him tens of millions to fight and has been waiting for months for him to commit one way or another

to a second Klitschko fight.

"We have had no contact with Lennox or his representatives," HBO Sports president Ross Greenburg said. "We're standing by."

Assuming Lewis does end his 14-year career, he'll become the first



reigning heavyweight champion to quit since Marciano in 1956. Muhammad Ali retired with the WBA title in 1978, but came back to lose fights to Larry Holmes and Trevor Berbick. Lewis would leave a legacy of big wins over Tyson and Evander Holyfield, but also a reputation for aloofness that never al-

lowed him to connect with boxing fans outside of Britain and Canada, where he grew up.

Lewis, though, fought infrequently in recent years, winning a huge fight with Tyson in June 2002, and stopping Klitschko on cuts last June in Los Angeles.

Lewis looked ragged against Klitschko. The champion took some big shots to the head and trailed on all three scorecards before the ring doctor ordered the fight stopped at the end of the sixth round because Klitschko was bleeding badly.

Despite an impressive record (41-2-1) and the victories over Tyson and Holyfield, Lewis' performances tended to be plodding rather than inspiring.

His two knockout losses - to Oliver McCall and Hasim Rahman - were huge upsets, but he went on to beat both in rematches. His one draw came against Holyfield in a fight most observers felt Lewis won. He later beat Holyfield on points to become undisputed world champion.





THE SPORTS

No. 1 Duke Edges No. 17 N.C., 83-81 (OT)

By JIM O'CONNELL

AP Basketball Writer

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. (AP) — Top-ranked Duke treated Roy Williams the same as the last two North Carolina coaches: The Blue Devils won again in the Smith Center.

Chris Duhon's reverse layup with 6.5 seconds left in overtime Thursday night gave Duke an 83-81 victory, the Blue Devils' 16th straight overall and fifth in the last six years on No. 17 North Carolina's home court. This one was over first-year coach Roy Williams, and the former assistant to Dean Smith left the court as did predecessors Bill Guthridge and Matt Doherty, losers at home to Duke.

Shelden Williams had 22 points and 12 rebounds for Duke (19-1, 8-0 Atlantic Coast Conference). He had two of his five blocks in overtime and also came up with a big defensive play in the final minute to force a turnover by the Tar Heels (13-6, 3-5).

Daniel Ewing scored 19 points for Duke, Luol Deng had 17 points and 12 rebounds, and J.J. Redick added 14 points.

Rashad McCants scored 27

points for North Carolina, including the 3-pointer with 13 seconds left that tied the game at 81. Sean May had 15 points and 21 rebounds for the Tar Heels, but was 7-for-18



from the field and missed a number of close-in shots.

The sellout crowd of 21,750, most wearing "Turn It Blue" T-shirts, was loud all night - but it was roaring and shaking the floor when McCants' fast-break dunk with 5:45 to go gave North Carolina a 69-62 lead.

Duke then turned up the defense and went on a 10-0 run, taking a 72-69 lead on two free throws by Deng with 1:06 left.

May scored on a rebound with 53 seconds to go, and Redick restored the three-point lead on a drive with 38 seconds left. North Carolina called a timeout, and Jawad Williams hit his only 3-pointer of the game with 18 seconds to go to tie it. Ewing missed a 3 with 3 seconds left for Duke.

Shelden Williams was a force inside in the overtime. His defense forced North Carolina into a 35-second shot clock violation with 22 seconds left. Redick then made two free throws to make it 81-78 and McCants, who finished 2-for-4 from 3-point range, drilled the 3 that tied it and set the stage for Duhon's heroics.

Melvin Scott missed a 3 at the buzzer for North Carolina, and it was appropriate that Shelden Williams grabbed the game's final rebound. The win evened Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski's record against North Carolina at 28-28, and he is 8-5 against the Tar Heels when his team is ranked No. 1.

Duke is 5-0 on the road in the ACC this season. The other eight teams in the conference have a total of five road wins.





HEADLINERS



Iowa Thieves Steal the Kitchen Sink

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — Thieves have been known to steal everything from construction sites but the kitchen sink. On Wednesday, that changed.

"I can retire now," quipped police Lt. Ray Rexroat.

The police report said burglars took only a stainless steel sink with chrome faucet and the attached garbage disposal from a house under construction on the city's east side.

"They are stealing everything, including the kitchen sink. It's a very prevalent problem," said Steve Staub, executive vice president of the Home Builders Association of Greater Des Moines.

Staub said construction sites are being hit harder and more often, fueled in part by a building boom and the high cost of materials. He said thieves have stolen washers and dryers, furnaces, faucets, fixtures, even doors and windows.

Forty-one construction burglaries were reported in Des Moines in the last eight months of 2003.

"There are so many subcontractors on a job, it's hard knowing who is supposed to be there, sometimes," Staub said. "Some of these people pull in during the middle of the day, load up and just drive away."

100 Men in NYC Seek Right to Wear Skirts

NEW YORK (AP) — About 100 men in minis, midis and even tutus took to the streets of Manhattan to call for an end to the tyranny of trousers.

"We're not transvestites, homosexuals or cross-dressers," David Johnson told the New York Times for Sunday editions. "We don't want you to call us Jean or Sally. We're men. Men who want the right to wear a skirt."

Johnson, a retired teacher from Poughkeepsie, N.Y., and the other pants opposers walked several blocks from the Guggenheim Museum to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where they visited an exhibit called "Bravehearts: Men in Skirts." Their presence attracted confused looks from a few fellow visitors.

Ingemar Johnsson, 39, came from Sweden to join the march Saturday. He told the Times that men in Europe often wore skirts and pantaloons until the time of the French Revolution, when pants became the expected masculine attire. Others pointed out that Scottish men have donned kilts for centuries.

"The male bird is always the pretty one, not the female," another participant, 27-year-old Chris Taylor, told the Times. "Why can't the male human being dress with style and color?"

Student Surrenders in Ga. Raccoon Killing

ATHENS, Ga. (AP) — A University of Georgia student turned himself in to authorities Thursday after a judge issued a warrant accusing him of killing a raccoon that was then skinned, burned and eaten by members of his fraternity. Judge Patricia Barron said she was disturbed by the allegations and ordered Erik Robert Zimmerman's arrest on misdemeanor charges of animal cruelty. Bond was set at \$1,000.

The raccoon had been behaving erratically - sometimes a sign of rabies - when it was killed near a trash container Dec. 12.

In court Thursday, Zimmerman said he threw a traffic cone at the raccoon, but was only trying to scare it away and did not mean to hit it. He said he used a pellet gun when the raccoon fell on the ground and began convulsing.

"I went to a friend's car and got his pellet gun because it was the best weapon I could find to kill it without making it suffer," Zimmerman said.

Police said a fraternity brother of Zimmerman's skinned the animal, and another ate some of it after the meat was burned. Zimmerman is the only member of the Phi Kappa Psi fraternity charged because he is the one accused of killing the animal.

Zimmerman's attorney, Robert Elkins, said the animal could have harmed someone else if Zimmerman had not killed it. "There are things he could have done differently but it doesn't mean (the killing) is a criminal act," Elkins said.

Animal control officer Kim Winter said Zimmerman should have contacted authorities when he saw the raccoon.





HEADLINERS



Colo. Man Is Accused of Biting Referees

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (AP) — The father of a high school basketball player has been cited for misdemeanor assault for allegedly biting two referees after his son's team lost a game.

Police said Kevin Powers, 48, bit the men during a struggle after La Junta defeated St. Mary's High School last Friday. His son plays for St. Mary's.

"I've worked every gym in this town and never had a problem," said referee Scott Stanec, who was bit on the head. John Carricato was bit on the hand.

A third referee said the men got in a fight after exchanging words following the game. Powers, however, said the confrontation began after the referees ran into him as they left the court.

"(The officials) were running off the court, not watching where they were going, and I wasn't watching where I was going," Powers said Wednesday. "I was wrestled to the ground and dragged across the gym. Somebody reached in and was gouging at my eyes. They had their hands in my mouth, and they were trying to turn me like a bowling ball. Whoever it was, I bit."

Tom Robinson, an official with the Colorado High School Activities Association, said Powers has been banned from high school athletic events in the state for the rest of the year.

St. Mary's Principal Patty Beckert said officials will now be escorted from the court to the locker room by school administrators.

Calif. Police Return Marijuana to Men

SANTA CRUZ, Calif. (AP) — A judge ordered police to return marijuana to the two men it was confiscated from.

Police pulled over Leo Beus on Sept. 22 because his car had tinted windows. Beus, 47, and his friend, Jon Balesteri, 54, had purchased 18 ounces of marijuana a day earlier at the Oakland Cannabis Buyers Club, said their attorney, Ben Rice.

They didn't have their medical prescriptions with them, but police allowed them to go home and retrieve them, Beus said. However, their \$3,000-plus worth of marijuana was confiscated for evidence.

Beus and Balesteri were charged with transporting and possessing marijuana for sale, but the charges were later dropped.

California allows people to grow, smoke or use medical marijuana with a doctor's recommendation.

Rice said Superior Court Judge Art Danner ordered the pot returned because of the December federal appeals court ruling that a congressional act outlawing marijuana can not apply in states with such laws.

Overtaken Van Spills 700 Live Rodents

PEARISBURG, Va. (AP) — A cargo van filled with cages carrying more than 700 gerbils, rats, mice and other rodents overturned Thursday, sending the animals scurrying onto a highway and sparking a bizarre large-scale rescue of the small animals.

The accident occurred when the van, driven by Thomas Marcinko of Zanesville, Ohio, hit an icy patch of U.S. 460 and ran off the left side of the road, hit a guardrail, overturned and slid onto the shoulder.

The animals, being transported in plastic cages, made a break for freedom.

"We caught probably 20 or 25 outside the vehicle. We caught another 25 inside the vehicle," said Bill Davis, one of eight members of the Giles County Lifesaving Squad who responded to a call for help. "Then we realized they were everywhere."

Marcinko walked away from the accident, and once he was checked out, the search for the critters was on.

"As cold as it is outside, we couldn't just leave them," Davis said. "I just started throwing them in back of the ambulance."





“Far Away”



Taylor Bryerton during Thanksgiving



Tech. Sgt. Karen Bryerton at work in Resource Management

***You're far away and I do not like it, you can't be close to me.
You seem so far, but then I realized how close you really are in just a heartbeat.
I feel you everywhere I go, you really are not far. I am here and you are there,
That's what people say, but it makes no difference how far you are,
because you are right here inside of my HEART.***

Dedicated To:

My Mom in Afghanistan

Love, Taylor B.

This poem was written by ten-year-old Taylor Bryerton and dedicated to her mother Tech Sgt. Karen Bryerton who is the NCOIC of Resource Management. Tech Sgt. Bryerton is stationed at RAF Mildenhall, U.K., and works with the Army for the OEF deployment.





tracting office is to spend money and make life in this barren land a little bit more comfortable. Increasing the amenities on base is a great way to boost the morale of the soldiers.

"We just want to create a better way of life for the troops," said Air Force Tech. Sgt. Stephen W. Back, contracting officer.

By working with the civilian sector, contracting is providing a liaison service essential to the coalition forces.

"Contracting has been on this base since day one," said James W. Cox, the contracting officer. "In fact, prior to the first soldier hitting the ground, you have some forms of contracting. It was either a pay agent, a FOO (field ordering officer), or a purchase agent. They hit the ground with a box of cash money." Mr. Cox, the thirty year civil service veteran, has been in country since June and has brokered some \$80 million in contracting improvements.

"This office was established so the Army spends the right amount of money for the right stuff," mentioned Faridoon Barakzai, also known as Farid, he is the procurement clerk and interpreter in the contracting office.

When the supplies and services can not be acquisitioned through the Army supply clerks, the Army goes to contracting to obtain them through different channels.

The contracting office is responsible for all of the southern region of Afghanistan, including the nine fire bases and two Provincial Reconstruction Team sites, stated Farid.

"Whatever it takes to support the troops in theater we buy it," said Cox.

As the war stretches past the two year mark, the contracting office is busier than ever before.

"Between Afghanistan and Iraq [US forces] are spending over \$23 million a day," said Cox. "Here in this office we spent \$3.7 million in the month of December."

"The key is to save money, spend money, and buy the right stuff," said Farid. For two years Farid, a local Afghan, has been working with the Army and other coalition forces.

Contracting provides jobs for the local people and makes it possible for Afghanistan to be a more prosperous nation.

Along with Afghanistan, KAF is also becoming a better place to live.

Because of the hard work of the contracting office, this base will see many upgrades in the next few months. Some of the upgrades are new modular housing, a new gymnasium with a rock climbing wall, an improvement in walk ways and repaving pot holes on the main road, Screaming Eagle Blvd, and the installation of 64 satellite systems.

"The best part about this job is that we see the results of our work," said Back, who has been working in contracting for six years.

In the next eight months the contracting office will



Tech. Sgt. Back looks over statistics that only make sense in Contracting.

spend close to \$2.5 million on gravel, \$30 million on modular housing, \$38,000 on the rock climbing wall, and \$60,000 on rock climbing gear.

The contracting office deals with many other countries along with Afghanistan.

"I have heaters coming in from the United Kingdom, air conditioner units directly out of China, I have bought other equipment from almost every state in the [U.S], services out of Kuwait and we deal with Pakistan and India all the time," said Cox.

"The key [to getting a contract is to] provide us with what we need at a fair and reasonable price and we can contact you, then we will do business with you," added Cox.

With every contract that Cox and his guys have completed, the servicemembers on KAF can take pleasure in a few more aspects of improved life.

"Some people say that the world doesn't revolve around contracts, I sometimes want to challenge that. Every aspect of life has to be negotiated, or an agreement has to be reached in some form of a contract, or even a mutual agreement between two friends," concluded Cox.

Mountain Warrior Weekly is always accepting comments and suggestions as to how we can improve your newspaper. If you have comments or suggestions, or simply just want to be added to our emailing list, email the staff at

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